

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council

Ordinary Meeting

Wednesday 18th March 2020

**Present: Councillor Peter Freeman (Mayor)
Councillors Linda Edwards, Rachel Evans, Les George, Stephen James, Hugh
Shepardson, Michael Theodoulou, Karen Trimble and Bob Walpole.**

**In attendance: Huw Thomas (Acting Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer), Shân
Loudon (Temporary Assistant Town Clerk),**

(Memorial Hall 7.00pm – 8.45pm)

153. Opening prayer

The Rev Nicholas Jones had sent apologies so no opening prayer was given.

154. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Richard Adler, Robert John, John Hedley Jones, Lisa Mitchell, Karen Morris, David Owens, Moira Thomas and Mary Wenman.

155. To receive members' declarations of interest in respect of the business to be transacted

No declarations were made.

156. To consider Police Business, if any

No report was presented.

The Mayor informed members that, due to unprecedented circumstances, the agenda item for co-option of new Councillors would be taken at this point, to allow those co-opted who were present as members of the public, to join the meeting.

There were three co-options for Burry Port, as follows:

Rachel Evans – proposed by Cllr Michael Theodoulou, seconded by Cllr Peter Freeman, all members voted in favour.

Andrew Philips – proposed by Cllr Linda Edwards, seconded by Cllr Hugh Shepardson, all members voted in favour.

Karen Trimble – proposed by Cllr Michael Theodoulou, seconded by Cllr Hugh Shepardson, all members voted in favour.

There were two co-options for Pembrey, for one vacancy, as follows:

Mary Elisabeth Evans, proposed by Cllr Peter Freeman, not seconded so no vote took place

Mayor/Maer



Les George, proposed by Cllr Stephen James, seconded by Cllr Michael Theodoulou, five members voted in favour.

The newly co-opted Councillors joined the meeting and each new member signed their declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of the Proper Officer. Cllr Les George commented that he was honoured to return to the Town Council.

157. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 19th February 2020

Cllr Hugh Shepardson **PROPOSED** that the minutes be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, seconded by Cllr Linda Edwards.

In the ensuing vote 5 members voted in favour with 4 abstentions, due to members not being present at the meeting. It was therefore **RESOLVED** to accept the proposal.

ACTION: Admin Assist

158. To receive an update from the Chairs Committee.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou informed members that an urgent special meeting of the Chairs Committee had taken place on Monday 16th March with 3 members present and 3 members joining the meeting via telephone conference call, with no voting right.

The meeting had been called to consider the Town Council response and action to the current coronavirus crisis. The following was recommended by the Chairs Committee:

Staff – offices to be closed to the public with immediate effect. There will be minimum staff attendance at the office, with those not present working from home. It was noted that there are usually 5 senior staff present at a Town Council meeting but to minimise the number present at the Council meeting, only 2 were in attendance. Going forward, when staff are present, there will only be one person per room. IT facilities are being set up in order for staff to work from home where possible. All members were in agreement with this. **RESOLVED**

Members were informed that Carmarthenshire County Council have suspended some of their Council meetings and Llanelli Rural Council have postponed Council and Committee meetings and all community facilities are closed to the public.

It was proposed by Cllr Michael Theodoulou and seconded by Cllr Stephen James that all Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council meetings, with the exception of the Chairs Committee, be suspended until further notice. **RESOLVED**

Action: Notice on Facebook, website etc

Discussion took place as to the best way forward to enable the Council to continue to function at this time. It was commented that all Councillors are on email so any non-urgent decisions could be made by all members. However, members were informed that this is not possible at present, and a meeting has to be held in order to take a decision and members of the public must be able to attend. This decision can then be relayed via email. Currently, if members are present via telephone conferencing, they are unable to vote, they have to be physically present. This may change in the future.

After discussion, it was proposed and **RESOLVED** that the Chairs Committee hold executive powers to act on behalf of the Council. All members were in agreement.

Mayor/Maer 

The advice from One Voice Wales is that Council's should agree to delegate authority to the Chair or Mayor (if that position holds executive powers) with consultation with the Clerk to avoid Council work freezing into inactivity.

It was proposed by Cllr Hugh Shepardson and seconded by Cllr Stephen James that this advice be accepted with delegated authority given to the Clerk in conjunction with the Chair of the Chairs Committee. All members were in agreement and therefore it was **RESOLVED**.

It was proposed by Cllr Bob Walpole and seconded by Cllr Michael Theodoulou that the Chair of each forum contact members and advise that they cancel all meetings in accordance with Government guidelines. All members were in agreement. **RESOLVED**

Action: Forum leaders to contact members

The Chairs Committee also discussed how the Town Council can help vulnerable people taking into account health and safety issues, legal responsibility etc. At present the Town Council will signpost the community to relevant organisations. Carmarthenshire County Council are currently setting up volunteer groups within the community.

Action: Acting Clerk to contact Carmarthenshire County Council

It was proposed by Cllr Michael Theodoulou and seconded by Cllr Linda Edwards that the Clerk be authorised, in conjunction with the Chairs Committee, to investigate what assistance the Town Council can give. All members were in agreement. **RESOLVED**

Cllr Hugh Shepardson informed members that there is a directive from Carmarthenshire County Council that tissues must not be placed in blue recycling bags or in food caddies. It was proposed by Cllr Stephen James and seconded by Cllr Michael Theodoulou that a notice to this effect be placed on our Facebook page, website and notice boards immediately. **RESOLVED**

Action: Admin Assistant/Assistant Clerk

Government recommendation is that no more than 10 persons attend weddings/funerals. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Michael Theodoulou and seconded by Cllr Stephen James that in relation to funerals we follow Government advice, close the cemetery offices to members of the public and inform local funeral directors of this decision. All members were in agreement. **RESOLVED**

Action: Cemetery/Facilities Superintendent

159. To consider the budget monitoring report

Members had received copies of the report in advance of the meeting. Each Committee had already seen and approved their respective budgets.

After brief discussion, Cllr Stephen James **PROPOSED** that the report be accepted, seconded by Cllr Michael Theodoulou. In the ensuing vote 9 members voted in favour, it was therefore **AGREED**, to accept the report.

160. To consider the following planning applications

Members were informed that the Planning Sub-Committee had not met. The following planning applications were discussed:

Mayor/Maer 

<u>Application No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Name and Address of Applicant</u>	<u>Description of Application</u>
S/40243	18/02/2020	Carmarthenshire County Council, property design and projects section, c/o agent, Asbri Planning Ltd - Mr Tomas Hopkins, Suite D, 1st floor, 220 High Street, Swansea, SA1 1NW	Discharge of Condition 18 (Disposal of surface water) on S/38235 (Proposed construction of residential development comprising 32 units with associated access, parking, landscaping & infrastructure works)
After discussion, 8 members voted to recommend approval with 1 abstention. AGREED.			
S/40307	03/03/2020	Llanelli Sand Dredging Ltd, WDA Industrial Estate, Burry Port, Carmarthenshire, SA16 0NN	Proposed extension and raising of levels to existing industrial storage yard with associated parking, staff portacabins, industrial hoppers and weighbridge at land adjacent to WDA Industrial Estate, Burry Port, Llanelli, SA16 0NN
After discussion, 7 members voted to recommend approval with 2 abstentions. AGREED.			
S/40317	06/03/2020	Mr & Mrs Laycock, 52 Maes y Capel, Pembrey, Burry Port, SA16 0EG	Proposed garage conversion into living area as part of the existing dwelling at 52 Maes y Capel, Pembrey, Burry Port, SA16 0EG
After discussion, 8 members voted to recommend approval with 1 abstention. AGREED.			

Action: Admin Assistant

161. To receive the County Councillor's report

Cllr Hugh Shepardson reported the following:

- Work had started on the new golf course in Pembrey County Park with funding of £150,000
- Work had started on the toilets in the Country park

Both these projects would be delayed due to the coronavirus. It was also noted that Pembrey ski slope was closed but the remainder of the park was open.

Cllr Les George congratulated Cllr Hugh Shepardson and County Councillor Shirley Matthews on obtaining this funding for Pembrey and hoped that Burry Port County Councillors would be able to obtain funding for this area as well.

162. To receive the Mayor's report

The Mayor reported that he had attended a few functions, but many had been cancelled.

Mayor/Maer 

163. To receive reports by elected members as Council Representatives on outside bodies

A paper had been circulated with the agenda on the One Voice Wales NEC meeting, which was noted by members.

Cllr Hugh Shepardson informed members of a proposed new election bill which would give votes to prisoners who are sentenced to a period of less than 4 years the right to vote in local elections in 2022 whilst still serving their sentence. It was proposed by Cllr Stephen James and seconded by Cllr Michael Theodoulou that the Clerk write to Welsh Government and oppose this recommendation. In the ensuing vote 6 member voted in favour of opposing this, 1 voted against, with 2 abstentions. **RESOLVED**

Acting: Acting Clerk to write letter

164. Consideration of membership of One Voice Wales

The Council use One Voice Wales regularly for advice and guidance. It was noted that Cllr Michael Theodoulou is currently the Chair of the Larger Local Councils Committee and Vice Chair of One Voice Wales. It was proposed by Cllr Stephen James and seconded by Cllr Peter Freeman that the Town Council continue with membership of One Voice Wales. **RSOLVED**

165. Consideration of 2020/21 fees and charges

It was agreed to refer this item to the Chairs Committee.

166. Consideration of the Town Council's Councillor Allowance Policy

As this related to the 2020/21 policy, it was agreed to defer this item.

167. Consideration of the Town Council's Reserves Policy

The paper based on the recommendations of the Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee had been circulated with the agenda. It was proposed by Cllr Stephen James and seconded by Cllr Linda Edwards that the reserves policy be accepted. All members were in agreement. **RESOLVED**

168. Consideration of whether the provision of having a secret ballot should be included in Standing Orders

It was agreed by all members that this item be deferred to the annual meeting. **RESOLVED**

169. Consideration of the appointment process of the Town Clerk

Members were informed that, in the past, the appointment of the Town Clerk had been undertaken by the full Town Council. The process is not detailed in the Council's Standing Orders and the recommendation of the Chairs Committee is that authorisation is given to this Committee to advertise, shortlist, interview and then provide a recommendation to Town Council. This recommendation was proposed by Cllr Michael Theodoulou and

Mayor/Maer 

seconded by Cllr Stephen James. It was noted that the Council have the right to agree or reject the Chairs Committee recommendation. An amendment was made to the original proposal by Cllr Hugh Shepardson and seconded by Cllr Les George that the Chairs Committee initiate the process and shortlist a candidate or candidates for interview and appointment by the full Town Council. In the ensuing vote 7 members were in favour of the amended proposal, with 2 against. **RESOLVED**

The position of Deputy Clerk was discussed and it was proposed by Cllr Stephen James and seconded by Cllr Hugh Shepardson that the Chairs Committee be responsible for this appointment. All members were in agreement. **RESOLVED**

170. Consideration of the asset transfer of the Station toilets

It was proposed by Cllr Michel Theodoulou and seconded by Cllr Stephen James that the Town Council undertake an asset transfer of the Station toilets. All members were in agreement. **RESOLVED**

Action: Acting Clerk to liaise with Carmarthenshire County Council

171. To consider the date for the Annual Meeting to be held in May, to include the recommendation from the Chairs Committee that it takes place on Monday 18th May for the election/appointment of the Mayor/Deputy Mayor and the presentation of medallions and that thereafter, the meeting be adjourned until Wednesday 20th May for the transaction of the remainder of the business

As it is likely that the Annual Meeting will be deferred, all existing Councillors will remain in their current posts.

172. To note the following minutes for information:

Date	Meeting
Wednesday 5 th February 2020	Facilities and Assets Committee
Wednesday 12 th February 2020	Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee
Monday 10 th February 2020	Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee
Tuesday 11 th February 2020	Chairs Committee
Tuesday 11 th February 2020	Burial Sub Committee
Thursday 20 th February 2020	Special Chairs Meeting
Tuesday 25 th February 2020	Special Chairs Meeting

The above minutes were noted.

173. To consider communications received

No additional communications, other than those circulated by email, had been received.

174. In camera discussions

Cllr Hugh Shepardson **PROPOSED** that the meeting move to in camera, seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole. In the ensuing vote all members voted in favour. **RESOLVED**

Mayor/Maer 

In camera - That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

175.

a) **To confirm the confidential minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Wednesday 19th February 2020**

Subject to one correction, the minutes of the above meeting were approved.

b) **To note the following confidential minutes**

Date	Meeting
Wednesday 5 th February 2020	Facilities and Assets Committee
Wednesday 12 th February 2020	Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee
Monday 10 th February 2020	Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee
Tuesday 11 th February 2020	Chairs Committee

Noted.

c) **Update on staffing issues**

Staffing issues were discussed.

